



DOI: 10.2478/rpp-2014-0040

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**AESTHETIC EDUCATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS
AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM
OF CONTINUOUS ART EDUCATION IN JAPAN**

ABSTRACT

The article examines aesthetic education of primary school pupils as an integral part of the national system of continuous art education in Japan. One of the most important traditional means of aesthetic education in Japan, according to L. Tsaryova is considered nature. Analysis of the scientific literature by domestic and foreign scientists suggests that instead of collective worship the Japanese established habits that help people develop artistic taste. Having considered the traditions of: tea ceremony, admiring nature; writing, which doesn't differ from painting and so on, one should point out that the traditions are valuable and remain till nowadays thus promoting the aestheticization of the Japanese people.

Key words: primary school, Japan, education, pupils, aesthetic education.

INTRODUCTION

It is a well-known fact about Japan that the cult of beauty is supported; since childhood a man is experiencing the beauty and harmony of the environment and without much compulsion becomes the admirer of high aesthetics. Harmony in the world around us is perceived by a man as something wonderful, and chaos – as something ugly. Even a child feels it instinctively deriving pleasure of beauty it gets anxious about ugly things.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

In this article we set out the goal to analyze the content of research of domestic and foreign scholars on the issue of aesthetic education in the educational environment of Japan.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

The problem of aesthetic education in Japan has been discussed by E. Abdulin, Yu. Boyarchuk, T. Hryhor'yeva, O. Zheleznyak, F. Zaporozhskyi, V. Ovchynnikov, V. Pronnikov, V. Samohvalova, D. Sudzuky, L. Troyelnikova, L. Tsarev and others.

The research methods we used are: theoretical analysis, synthesis, the method of studying educational and historical documents.

RESULTS

As O. Zheleznyak states, during the long history the Japanese people have developed a specific conception, which is based on the idea of beauty. For the Japanese, the world is beautiful in all its forms. Japanese Beauty is dynamic, mobile, instant. Each era of Japanese history was characterized by its features in the perception of Beauty, but the latter has always been seen as a condition for achieving harmonization of the real world. This allows the Japanese to live in harmony with the surrounding nature, not in opposition to it, and coexisting in harmony with it.

Specific attitude towards the beauty of the world remains due to the extraordinarily robust and rich tradition of aesthetic education, which aims at developing morally and aesthetically developed personality with the “Japanese national character”, whose main feature is a kind of aestheticism, around which other features are grouped. The ideal



contained in this character is the goal of moral and aesthetic education of the Japanese. Aesthetic education is, according to researcher, a complex, purposeful, systematic process aimed at developing a human aesthetic attitude to reality, achieved due to the possibilities of the family and school (Железняк, 1998).

One of the most important traditional means of aesthetic education in Japan, according to L. Tsaryova is considered nature. As V. Ovchynnikov states, the Japanese are not really religious. The role of religion is replaced by the cult of beauty, derived from the adoration of nature. People consider the nature to be the measure of their perceptions of beauty. As Japan is a country of mountains and sea bayi, scenic panoramas. This very nature – pinei on coastal cliffs, mirror mosaic of rice fields, the dark volcanic lake – is generally accepted in this country to be the canons of beauty. The aspiration for the harmony with nature is the main feature of Japanese art. The Japanese like to time family celebrations to significant natural phenomena: a Japanese cherry tree blossom, or autumn full moon; they like to see on their holiday tables the dishes, which remind the season (Овчинников, 1971).

According to P. Schmidt, a Japanese sucks with mum's milk the love to nature's beauty and the ability to catch its beauty as he grows among the rich and diverse nature and since childhood he admires the graceful outlines of volcanoes touching the sky by their peaks, the turquoise sea, dotted with numerous green islands.

The feeling of refinement, the tendency to enjoy the beauty are peculiar to all Japanese people – from the farmer to the aristocrat. An ordinary Japanese farmer is aesthetic and artist in his heart, as he sees the beauty directly in the environment. He often performs distant trips to admire some beautiful scenery. Mountains are especially beautiful, springs and waterfalls even serve as an object of reverent worship, being intertwined in the common ideas of Confucian and Buddhist shrines. Japanese Art arose from the cult of beauty, based on the strange coloring of the surroundings (Востоков, 1997).

The Japanese like rocks covered with moss, dwarf old crooked trees, because they contain a special charm (Овчинников, 1971). These features combine old concept of "sabi" – which is one of the measures of beauty in Japan and represents the relationship between art and nature.

The second measure of beauty is "wabi" – the beauty of simplicity, utilitarian beauty (spatula to serve rice, a stand for kettle etc).

When connected, these concepts have evolved into one word "sybuy", which combines the natural beauty and the beauty of simplicity. Natural beauty is material for the subject. The beauty of simplicity is the beauty purpose of this subject.

The charm of uncertainty is the fourth criterion of the Japanese idea of beauty: it is necessary to know some enlightenment through intuition. This is the beauty that lies in the depths of things. So the Japanese identify four criteria to measure beauty (Овчинников, 1971).

As the Buddhist sect zen teaches, the idea of completeness is incompatible with constant changes of the world. It is impossible to reach full perfection for longer than a moment and the latter sinks in the stream of constant changes. Improving is more beautiful than perfection. That's why the artwork which has some uncertainty is able to tell about beauty.

Japanese art reject symmetry. A Japanese sees beauty in the asymmetric placement of decorative elements, impaired balance, which represents the alive and mobile world for him. The asymmetric use of space excludes parity. Any duplication of decorative elements is considered by Japanese aesthetics to be a sin. The tableware on the Japanese table has nothing to do with the dinner set. A Japanese considers it tasteless to have similar paintings everywhere (Овчинников, 1971).

As H. Vostokov states, a Japanese watches and captures asymmetric in nature, imbalance, highlights the shapes when they change (Востоков, 1997).



An important way to influence the human soul in the world religions are collective rituals. Due to the fact that the place of religion in Japan is largely occupied by the cult of beauty, the role of collective rituals is played by traditions and ceremonies intended to make people developing their artistic taste together. In Japan, there is a whole system of collective aesthetic exercises involving the Japanese regularly. It should be noted that for centuries the Japanese have been producing a kind of techniques that allow them to develop and maintain their taste in art (Овчинников, 1971).

We draw attention to the fact that long before the hieroglyphic writing the Japanese had collective poetic traditions to observe natural phenomena (the newly fallen snow; plum tree, azaleas, cherry tree blossom; the scarlet leaves of rock maple; a full moon). The ability to feel, to build relationships with the natural harmony has generated a kind of deliberate acts of aesthetic communion with nature – the so-called “admiration”, which contribute to the formation of aesthetic feeling.

The ability to feel nature, realising oneself as a part of it, the ability to express the unity of man and nature in all forms of human activity in Japan has always been an obligatory feature of a civilized person who is able to appreciate the beauty of the moonlight, singing cicadas and others (Царьова, 2011).

L. Tsaryova notes that the ability to feel the harmony and build one’s relationship with nature promotes purposeful aesthetic cognition and perception of nature. The so-called “admiration” of nature, which are so traditional for the Japanese, is the source of aesthetic sense that contributes to a sense of color, shape, artistic taste, experience of creative behavior. Admiring nature in Japan is considered a characteristic way of spending free time (Tsariova, 2011).

This is how V. Ovchynnikov describes the custom of admiring a full moon on the ninth day of the full moon in the old calendar, when there is a tradition to admire the beautiful full moon. The best place for this in Kyoto is Temple Dayhakudzi. At half past six in the evening from behind the mountains, which is behind the lake a very large, round full moon is rising, as if forged of gold.

We believe that the admiration of nature contributes to the aestheticization of a child’s life, satisfying his aesthetic needs that are the basis of his spiritually oriented activities. In general such admiration, a contact with nature has a unique ability to influence the child, helping to create his aesthetic and moral values and as a result helping to form the child’s self-realization in society.

It is typical for a Japanese to have a striving for reviewing. When he reviews, he does not single out a particular object for observation, but dissolves his attention in the perception of the whole panorama. He peers into, listens attentively to, feels the world that lies ahead of him, and feels just like a part of it included in it. For Japanese beauty is primarily self harmony with all objective reality. As Z. Vasilyeva states, the ability to feel nature and oneself as part of it, the ability to express one’s understanding of it have always been considered an obligatory feature of a civilized person (Васильева, 1999).

Practice of admiration facilitates entry into a resonant relationship with inspired being, energy purification and achieve harmony instead of chaos passion within oneself (Nurutdinova). Beauty is apprehended in the act of direct attentive listening to the world and brings out the uniqueness of each phenomenon of reality (cherry blossom, full moon, etc.) (The traditional model of aesthetic education in Japan). Live feeling of unity with nature allowed to see the sacred meaning in the image of cherry blossoms branches (Aesthetics: Dictionary, 1989). Japanese cherry blossom begins suddenly and violently. Its pink buds excite citizens of this country by their fragility. Petals do not fade quickly. They fly with the slightest gasp of wind and fall to the ground quite fresh, and this is how they give way their beauty (Овчинников, 1971). There is a tradition to develop the habit of collective admiration of



poetic natural phenomena since childhood (Троельникова, 2010). According to O. Zavyalova (Завьялова, 1990), mass media always inform about the place and time where you can admire the Japanese cherry tree blossom.

At the time of Japanese cherry tree blossom numerous people at weekends go to the mountains to enjoy the unique performance of a violent but brief flowering. There are a lot of festivals, concerts, performances in parks, performances under the blossoming trees timed to this blossom (The traditional model of aesthetic education in Japan).

In our opinion, while admiring this plant (Japanese cherry tree), its delicate petals a child learns to notice slight changes at some point in his life since childhood and for the rest of his life, and at some stage of his life he will notice a change in a moment, for example, when a detached petal flies. It does not fade, but differs from the petals which a flower still holds by its form in some way, color and so on. And at that moment the child can already catch these minor changes. What happiness and satisfaction will he get from it! Of course, this ability is not produced at once, but this ability can be obtained, though hard for us to believe that everyone can obtain it. How much is invested in the aesthetic education by mothers, teachers while group admiration.

The presence of specific terms to refer to admiration, its ritual organization suggests that the admiration – “tsukimi” (admiration of a moon), “hanami” (of flower), etc. – are acts of entirely conscious aesthetic activity, part of the daily life of Japanese people. According to L. Tsaryova, these forms of aesthetic activities that involve the ability to concentrate and contemplate, since the Middle Ages, have been seen in Japan as a necessary precondition of aesthetic perception, as a source of aesthetic culture of the child (Царьова, 2011).

Continuing L. Tsarova’s opinion, V. Samohvalova emphasizes that aesthetic education in Japan is being paid much attention. Sparing no money, the government of the state invests them in culture, education and aesthetic education, thinking that it is beneficial to the state, because the presence of a high level of aesthetic culture of the person will oblige him in the performance of certain work to seek to embody beauty in the results of his work – beauty serves as an economic category. Thus aesthetic education acquires the status of economical economy management. A researcher in her paper “The role of traditional culture in the Japanese model of aesthetic education” argues that the Japanese enrich their work by aesthetic elements; she states that work for them is enjoying both the process itself and the results of their work (Самохвалова, 1990).

As it can be seen from the things stated above, in Japan parents carry the aesthetic education of the younger generation with the hoping to apply the obtained results to improve economy, because people with a high level of aesthetic education will embody beauty in the results of their work at their workplace and achieve the best of results. This fact is well worth paying attention and borrowing. Because of this attitude to aesthetic education in Japan, we decided to describe how the problem of aesthetic training and education is solved in kindergarten, an elementary school in Japan.

Studying in Japan begins in kindergarten at the age of three. These educational institutions do not belong to compulsory educational establishments and are created for the development of mental and physical abilities of the child to provide the adaptation process to further studying.

In a Japanese kindergarten there are classes for the development of musical and artistic abilities. The content of lessons has national character. In particular, in teaching music choral singing is preferred. It is unpedagogic to single out a soloist. Singing in chorus helps to develop the sense of unity with the team. The classes of applied art involves teaching the ancient art of origami, oyatiro thus contributing to the development of fine motor coordination which schoolchildren need to write hieroglyphs (Зверева, Муравьева).



A preschool pupil in the kindergarten gets acquainted with a palette of 25 shades of colors. The Japanese believe that the optimal number of kids for every kindergart(e)ner is 3–5 persons. This responsible attitude is due to the need of developing children's senses since an early age when the emotional foundations of culture are laid. Moreover, adults do not teach a child, but educate him in the process of making arts together: making some objects of paper, clay, making animal masks, costumes for children's parties, etc. The principle of education according to national traditions is continued at school music lessons, drawing and handmade lessons and lessons of housekeeping (Зверева, Муравьева).

Aesthetic education in elementary schools in Japan holds a special place, because art is recognized as treasury of achievements of spiritual values of their ancestors. One aspect of educating the children according to national traditions is celebrations, accompanied by carnival performances, music, songs, dances (De Mente, 1987) because children are involved. The most favored children's holidays are the Holiday of Dolls (khan matsuri), Boys' Day (tango-no-seccu), Holyday "seven-five-three" (siti-ho-san). According V. Ovchinnikov the Holiday "seven-five-three", which is held every year on November 15, is characterized that the seven-year, five-year and three-year-old children are festively dressed, given candy spears that symbolize long life, and are lead to the church to perform the rite (Овчинников, 1971).

These holidays are colorful and emotional ways to involve children in the national cultural traditions, a way to accustom modern Japanese children to beauty, to the symbolic language of ritual, the aesthetic perception of the world (Царьова, 2011). During the game, children observe nature and reproduce it in drawings using chalk, sprig, during which children acquire certain skills.

So in Japan they use the following forms of esthetic training and education that meet the traditional teaching ideas: lessons – subjects of Aesthetic Cycle (music, art) and other subjects (calligraphy, labour, literature, etc.); extracurricular in-school activities (ceremony of beginning and end of the school year, survival schools, ikebana, tea ceremony, origami, etc.); extracurricular out-of-school activities (collective admiration of nature – tsukimi, hanami; observing the stars, visiting theater performances, exhibitions, tours, participation in clubs of tangerine garden care, etc.).

Thus, as L. Troyelnikova states, in Japan an artistic outlook lies in the basis of the tenor of life. In particular, all the vital functions of the individual in Japan are subject to preservation, assimilation and application of their centuries-old traditions in daily life. The life and creative power of Japanese culture is transmitted to rising generation by means of artistic education, it aestheticizes their minds, promotes basic qualities of the national character, influences positive and responsible attitude to things and people around them, defines a set of values and psychological priorities (Троельников, 2010).

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the scientific literature by domestic and foreign scientists suggests that instead of collective worship the Japanese established habits that help people develop artistic taste.

Having considered the traditions of: tea ceremony, admiring nature; writing, which doesn't differ from painting and so on, one should point out that the traditions are valuable and remain till nowadays thus promoting the aestheticization of the Japanese people.

Thus, the formation of aesthetic awareness of primary school pupils in the education of Japan takes place in the following areas: 1) education (learning the basics of aesthetic education); 2) upbringing (expressing the unity of man and nature while conducting mass arrangements through aesthetic empathy, collective awareness; 3) providing the children, parents and teachers with literature which would help to form the principles of artistic thinking.



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